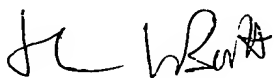


REMARKS

This application is a U.S. national stage application based on the enclosed international application PCT/EP2003/008173 that was filed on July 24, 2003 designating, *inter alia*, the United States. By this preliminary amendment, Applicants have canceled claims 1-7, without prejudice, and added claims 8-27. As a result, claims 8-27 are pending in this application. No new matter is believed added.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Application as presented is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary in order to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



John W. LaBatt, Reg. No. 48,301
Hoffman, Warnick & D'Alessandro LLC
Three E-Comm Square
Albany, NY 12207
(518) 449-0044 - Telephone
(518) 449-0047 - Facsimile

Dated: May 12, 2005